

ELIZABETH DOBNEY SHORT BROWN



Elizabeth D. Short Brown, daughter of William John Short and Elizabeth Curtis, was born in London, England, on November 24, 1841. She attended the Church of England until ten years of age, learning many things and chapters of the Bible and their beliefs by heart. She moved with her parents in 1850, to the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa, where her father took up the trade of wholesale butchering. By shipping his products to England, he became very prosperous.

It was in Africa that Elizabeth first heard the gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. She and her mother were baptized into the church, on November 18, 1855, by Elder Leonard I. Smith. They entertained many of the Elders and the Saints there.

She knew Elder Henry Dixon and his people. Dixon's father, being a minister in their town. Henry, and his only son, were disinherited upon joining the church. He came to Utah soon after returning as a missionary, so they had the privilege of traveling to Utah in the same company with him. They came in Captain Alvis Patterson's company.

For many years, Elizabeth and her mother exercised their faith and prayers that the way would be opened for their family to immigrate to Utah. The father, not being very strong in the faith, held them back. He said he had come to Africa to enter business, and as he was so successful, did not want to leave. However, they finally prevailed on him to let the eldest son, William, accompany the family to Utah. The father stayed to sell out his business, with the idea of joining them in Utah the next year.

Elizabeth records in her journal, "I left Africa with my mother, brothers, William S., Charles, Samuel Joseph, and sister, Mary Ann, to come to Utah, April 1, 1863. Sailing on the ship, "Henry Ellis", we arrived in New York, having been eight weeks on the ocean. We traveled by train and steamboat to Florence, Nebraska, the outfitting place for the plains.

After preparing a few weeks, fitting up teams, provisions, etc., we along with a few other families that had traveled with us from Africa, joined in the company with a train of freight to cross the plains, this being Captain Alvis Patterson's Company. It took six months to accomplish our journey. We arrived in Great Salt Lake City, on September 4, 1863.

Sometime after arriving in Utah, a letter came from my Aunt in Africa, saying that as soon as our ship had gone, my father began wringing his hands and pacing up and down the shore like a mad man at the thought of having let his family go, while others urged him on to think he would never see them again. However, we never regretted coming to Utah.

The first Christmas I spent in Utah was in Farmington, Davis County, with Mrs. Leroy Scofield, a friend who crossed the plains with us. It was at this place that I became acquainted with Philander Brown, who later became my husband.

This is how it came about: Brother Brown and his wife, Orilla, were neighbors of my friend of whom I have just spoken. As Orilla had no children of her own, she was desirous that her husband should have a family, so according to their religious belief, she told her husband that she was sure I was to be his wife. I said I could not think of it, as my father was not yet in Utah, and I never did anything without consulting him.

Mr. Brown asked me to consult President Brigham Young and made an appointment for me to do so. President Young told me of the very sacredness of the marriage covenant. Telling me that if I would marry Brother Brown now, I would have crowns and glorious blessings added to me that I could get in no other way, but if I waited until my father came, he would stop me, and we would all go downhill together. Whereas, if I married him now, all my family would come to me. And now, I bear testimony that I lived to see the day that every one of my people did come to me for faith and assistance in time of need.

I was married to Philander Brown, February 6, 1864, by President Wilford Woodruff, in

the Endowment House at Salt Lake City, Utah. The first child that came to bless our home was Zina Elizabeth, born in Farmington, on June 17, 1865. The next, also, was a daughter, Emily Orilla, born December 1866.

My first appointment in the church was Treasurer in the first Relief Society organized in Farmington. At the General October Conference in 1868, my husband was called to take his family and on what was called the Muddy Mission in Southern Utah. In November of the same year, he took his wife Orilla, my little daughter Zina, and myself, not being able to go, remained until the next year with my baby Emily Orilla.

On December 21, 1868, my first son, Philander Franklin was born, while his father was away on the mission in St. Joseph, Piute County, Nevada. In May 1869, by then, my husband returned. We sold our home to make ready to go south. Our only son, who was born during those trying times, sickened, and died on August 30, 1869. At this time we were prepared to leave for the south, the company being delayed while we buried our darling. It was hard to leave him behind, but we left on the third of September 1869, arriving at St. Joseph, the latter part of the month.

On arriving at this place, we found the settlement moved to a new location. Therefore, rendering the home my husband had built there at so much expense and hard labor, useless, only for the material in it.

We moved to a new location where he bought land, trading the other property for it. We lived in wagons and tents until houses could be built. When our home was finished, I sewed the carpet together and helped to tack it down. It was eleven o'clock that evening when we quit working. Early the next morning, March 13, 1870, my son Charles Hyrum was born.

President Young and his company made a visit to that country just eight days after my baby was born. The company camped around our house. President Young and his wife, Amelia, spent the nights in our house. On account of this company coming, I got up from my bed; President Young found me sitting up in an armchair. He inquired how old my baby was. When I told him eight days, he immediately took upon himself a doctor's authority, and ordered me back to bed at once, and there to stay until he and his party left the place.

On the evening of the same day, at my request, President Young blessed our baby boy, giving him the name of Charles Hyrum, and such a wonderful blessing it was. At the departure of the company, President Young came to my room, and pushing the

window curtain aside, he said, "And now, you may sit up and see the party pass by your window". Thus, he exercised his judgement, his thoughtful attention, and wise council and teachings upon the family while he stayed with us.

In January 1871, it was found out that this country belonged to Nevada, so we were counseled to vacate the place, which we did. In February 1871, we left our houses and lands again. Our husbands had to first take our bread stuff to the nearest settlement, St. George, one hundred miles away, or we would have nothing to eat, it being winter, and we were still expecting the Nevada officials to come and take our teams and wagons for back taxes which we had paid in Utah. However, we got away with our teams before they took them. All the means we took with us amounting to \$300, was spent for improvements which we had to leave behind.

After staying for a few weeks in St. George, we took our journey North, stopping at Kanab, Kane County, in March 1871. At this place, we got a small room at the fort. Levi Stewart was Bishop here. In May, some of the brethren began putting up lumber houses outside the fort, our home being one of the first to be finished.

It was in this house that my daughter Mary Emeline was born, June 26, 1871. We had just began to get settled good in our new home, having built a log house and fenced two lots in another part of the settlement as well, having our crops ready for what we supposed would be an excellent harvest, when on June 4, 1871, a cloud burst came and flooded our land, covering everything with about two feet of sand and rock.

Our mission now being filled in "The Muddy", my husband at the age of 46, took his young family and started North once more, after receiving a letter from his brother-in-law, John Leavitt, saying that the railroad was coming through to Utah and that the knowledge my husband had of building railroads may command for him a good job. So, the family journeyed to the North, arriving in American Fork, in August of 1872. On September 24, 1872, my son, Harvey Alfred, was born. My husband accepted a position up American Fork Canyon on the construction of the Narrow Gauge Railway.

When the Southern Pacific Railroad was resumed, he worked for them. We managed to put our belongings on the construction train, which brought us as far as Provo River Bridge. Our first night spent in Provo was camping by the side of the Provo River.

We rented a house in Provo, 533 South 5th West, in the First Ward, and here my fourth son, William John, was born, January 24, 1874. Later we bought a home in the Second Ward.

At this home, my last five children were born, a daughter Ellen Adel, May 19, 1875, a son B. Jared, February 6, 1877, another daughter, Phoebe Diantha, December 26, 1878, and my last, George Albert, February 23, 1880. It was here, also, that my last little son, of whom I have spoken, B. Jared, was taken by the hand of death, November 27, 1879.

I appreciate the fact that I was able to remain in this home where the rest of the family was born, after moving around so much it was a great pleasure that we finally settled. I truly hope to remain in this place the rest of my life. (This she did).

On May 19, 1883, I was set apart as teacher in the Second Ward Sunday School by Abraham Holliday. June 18, 1883, I was set apart as a teacher in the Relief Society, by Evan Wride. On March 6, 1884, I was set apart as Assistant Secretary, in the Relief Society by Bishop James W. Loveless. Next, I was set apart as First Counselor to Sara A. Scott, in this same Relief Society, by S. P. Eggerson.

June 30, 1896, I received a license to teach in the first religion class organized in the Provo Second Ward, Brother James Hardy, was the other teacher. This license was signed by President Wilford Woodruff, George Reynolds, and Dr. Karl G. Maeser. In 1900, I was made Treasurer of the Woman's Suffrage Association of Utah County, which position I held until we received our franchise. In 1902, I was set apart as a member of the Utah Stake Relief Society Board by President Joseph B. Keeler.

My husband's first wife, Orilla, died May 1896, after which I cared for my husband until his death on January 1916. In December 1900, we sent our son, George, into the mission field. He filled a successful mission and returned home in 1903. I have traveled through Utah County with members to do Relief Society work. I have been many times to the Salt Lake Temple and have done work for my own people, my husband's relatives, and have also done charity work for the dead.

On November 24, 1887, my husband was arrested for his religious beliefs and practices, so called "unlawful cohabitation", by Deputy Marshall McClellan. He also served a subpoena on myself to appear before Commissioner Hill. We were then placed under bonds to appear at the term of court. We appeared, and my husband pleaded guilty before Judge Judd. Sentence was suspended on the conditions of observing the law."

This little incident just quoted, was one of the greatest trials of my mother's life and as she records: "We never lived together again as husband and wife, but the Lord doth all things well."

She firmly believed in the gospel counsel, President Brigham Young, had given her and her faith was strong in the gospel. One Elder said that if she was placed on an island all alone, she would have never lost her faith in the gospel.

She records two accidents, one while she was a child seven years old, while living in England. She was running home from Sunday School and fell on the paved sidewalk and became unconscious for forty-eight hours. Her parents thought she would never recover, but she still had faith and rallied, and was soon well again. July 1895, at Provo, a runaway horse knocked her down and broke her leg. She had a very narrow escape this time also, but it proved a blessing in disguise, because the doctor said she was made well by having to stay off her feet for six weeks, she being in the change of life and having very delicate health.

After her husband died, on January 8, 1916, at the age of eighty-nine years, she fell on her kitchen floor and broke her hip. This caused her to be confined to her bed for three months, after which time she was able to walk again, and to do her own work with the help of her sons, Harvey, and many of her other children and grandchildren. She lived six years longer.

My mother had a good education for her day. She was a good penman, a great historian of herself and relatives, giving correct dates. She was a very accurate Secretary and Treasurer. All of her recordings were neatly done. She was orderly in her home; every picture and parcel were labeled. She had a box full of newspaper clippings of important happenings of her friends and relatives, such as deaths, marriages, and missions. She could tell you the exact place to find anything in her home.

She was a constant reader of the newspapers and church magazines. Her mind was clear and her memory good until the last few hours of the life she had. She could always tell you what was going on in the church or government or in the mission field as she read it. She was a great admirer of the work of Apostle Reed Smoot, as Senator in our great government. She used to say that our Latter Day Saint people will someday have to take the reins of this government.

Mother passed from this world of trials and separations from her husband to meet with him and her loved ones, never to be separated again, at noon, on January 9, 1930, leaving a posterity of eight living children, 42 grandchildren and 59 great grandchildren, totaling 109 descendants.

(Sketch compiled by daughter, Mary Brown Hales)